



ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

for Kent Business 2004

KINGS HILL GOLF CLUB

Greening the Greens

The celebrity status of world class golfers has led to a huge increase in the game's popularity and manicured golf courses are springing up all over the place to feed that demand.

Anyone travelling through the Kent countryside will notice the changes to the landscape, with sand bunkers, water hazards and verdant fairways popping up among the fields, orchards, towns and villages.

Golf course designers and managers are well aware of the environmental issues surrounding course development and are increasingly adopting best practices to ensure that a balance is achieved between the man made and the natural environments. A prime example of this in Kent is the Kings Hill Golf Club near West Malling.

In fact, its harnessing of these two worlds was so impressive that it scooped the award for Land Management and Biodiversity in the Environment Awards for Kent Business.

Biodiversity – a strategic issue

With declining numbers of species of flora and fauna and the growing impact of climate change, biodiversity is one of the greatest strategic issues in the county - and the Awards judges were looking for companies which were not only achieving compliance but were doing more than other businesses in their industry sector.

The popular 6,600 yard par 72 Kings Hill Golf Club is set in 200 acres featuring large areas of protected heath and mature woodland, which posed specific challenges during design and construction.

From the outset, advice was sought from the Kent Wildlife Trust to ensure that delicate and rare habitats were protected and biodiversity enhanced while maximising the enjoyment of playing golf. The Club's managers continue to implement an excellent conservation and biodiversity programme while still getting full use of the site.

Conservation areas

They use a minimum of fertilisers and pesticides - and don't use any at all in their conservation areas. They have constructed bird boxes and woodpiles in several locations to encourage wildlife and left heathland undisturbed.

Summary of Key Achievements

- Scooped the award for Land Management and Biodiversity in the Environment Awards for Kent Business.
- 200 acres featuring large areas of protected heath and mature woodland.
- Encourage wildlife and heathlands left undisturbed.
- Controlled use of water via installation of a weather station to monitor soil moisture content and precipitation levels.



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Groundsmen use a closed loop water system to wash machinery, reducing water usage.

To minimise the use of water they have installed a weather station to monitor soil moisture content and precipitation levels, which means the site is only irrigated when needed. This has taken the guesswork out of irrigation and ensures that the course is always kept at its optimum irrigation level.

Groundsmen use a closed loop water system to wash machinery. This uses the same water over and over again, further reducing water usage.

Waste is recycled or reused whenever possible, with green waste composted and put back on the land, and rubber crumb - made from recycled tyres - used to repair areas of wear on the course.

Commenting on the award, the judges stated that the Kings Hill Golf Club with its large site had a great responsibility to manage it carefully to ensure that wildlife was not only protected, but encouraged. The Club, they felt, had developed an excellent conservation and biodiversity programme on its site, while still keeping it open and available for use by customers.

To contact Kings Hill Golf Club call 01732 875040, email: khatkhgolf@aol.com / info@kingshill-golfclub.com or visit www.kingshill-golfclub.com



Green waste is composted and put back on the land.



Woodpiles encourage wildlife.



A weather station monitors soil moisture content and precipitation.

These awards are co-ordinated by the Kent Sustainable Business Partnership who is supported by Kent County Council, Business Link Kent and the Environment Agency.

The Awards Judging Panel and Kent Sustainable Business Partnership are supported by a wide range of statutory, NGO and voluntary organisations engaged in business support and environmental improvement.

For sustainable best practice information consult the Regional Business Learning Centre at www.egeneration.co.uk or contact Kent Sustainable Business Partnership on 01622 221859.

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